

REMARKS

The Examiner's Action mailed on April 14, 2006 has been received and its contents carefully considered.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the allowance of claims 12-22 and have restricted the application to the allowed subject matter in an effort to expedite prosecution to an early allowance. While it is believed that all of the claims, including the rejected claims, are allowable over the prior art, the rejected claims have been canceled from the application without prejudice or disclaimer to expedite the prosecution to an early allowance. Claims 1, 4-22, 24 and 25 are pending in the application; claims 12-22 are allowed, and claims 1, 4-11, 24 and 25 are rejected. In this Amendment, claims 1, 4-11, 24 and 25 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer. It is submitted that this application is in condition for allowance.

Applicants note with appreciation that the Examiner has indicated that claims 12-22 are allowable over the prior art of record. It is therefore respectfully submitted that the independent claim 12 and its dependent claims 13-22 are now in condition for allowance.

Claims 1, 7, 8, 11 and 24 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable by *Huang et al.* (US 6,521,922 B1) in view of *Wu* (US 6,689,658 B2). Claims 1, 7, 8, 11 and 24 have been canceled. As such, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claims 4-6 and 10 were rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Huang et al.* and further in view of *Wolf* and *Tauber* (Silicon Processing for the VLSI Era Volume 1: Process Technology). Claims 4-6 and 10 have been canceled. As such, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Huang et al.* in view of *Wu*, and further in view of *Sung* (US 6,235,592,B1). Claim 9 has been canceled. As such, the rejection should be withdrawn.

Based on the above, it is submitted that the application is in condition for allowance and such a Notice, with allowed claims 12-22 earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner feel that a conference would help to expedite the prosecution of the application, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned counsel to arrange for such an interview.

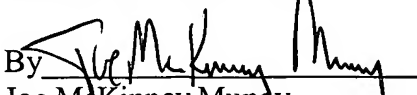
Application No. 10/671,773
Amendment dated July 14, 2006
After Final Office Action of April 14, 2006

Docket No.: 4448-0184PUS1

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Dated: July 14, 2006

Respectfully submitted,

By 

Joe McKinney Mundy

Registration No.: 32,334

BIRCH, STEWART, KOLASCH & BIRCH, LLP

8110 Gatehouse Road

Suite 100 East

P.O. Box 747

Falls Church, Virginia 22040-0747

(703) 205-8000

Attorney for Applicant